

Claims

1. Binder for letterpress printing inks, comprising a resin which is a modified condensation product of phenol and formaldehyde, said modified condensation product having a molecular weight ranging from 300 to 10 millions, with more than 24% of the product having a molecular weight above 1 million, and a melting point of at least 130°C, and an absolutely aromatic-free solvent.
2. Binder according to claim 1, wherein the resin is a phenol-formaldehyde-modified rosin (colophonium) resin.
3. Binder according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the solvent comprises a mineral oil fulfilling the requirements of the US Federal Drug Administration (FDA), 21 CFR 178.3620(a).
4. Binder according to claim 3, wherein the mineral oil is a white oil.
5. Binder according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the solvent additionally comprises a vegetable oil.
6. Binder according to claim 5, wherein a mixture of mineral oil and vegetable oil in a ratio of 1:1 to 5: 1, particularly preferred in a ratio of 1: to 2: 1, is used.
7. Binder according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the ratio of resin component to solvent system is between 1:1 to 1:2.
8. Letterpress printing ink, comprising a binder according to any one of claims 1 to 7.
9. Letterpress printing ink according to claim 8, additionally comprising at least one colorant and optionally additives, wherein said colorants and additives are essentially non-toxic, preferably of food grade.

10. Letterpress printing ink according to any one of claims 8 or 9, wherein the ink comprises at least 25 % by weight of colorant.
11. Use of a binder according to any one of claims 1 to 7 for the preparation of a letterpress ink for direct cigarette printing.
12. Use of a letterpress printing ink according to any one of claims 8 to 10 for direct cigarette printing.